

Civil War

Shortly after the Civil War a political orator waved the bloody flag at Edray and urged the people to vote the way they had shot. Rev. John Waugh replied to him something like this: "The war is over. It is our duty to promote peace. I had a son in the Confederate army and I had a son in the Union army. If the hostilities continue, the factions will be holding their basket dinners in different hollows." This was the last effort on the part of any speaker to make a bloody flag speech in this county.

From 1926 W. Va. Blue Book

* (red) The Civil War marked the division line in this county between the old and the new. The thinking men in the county were especially interested in the 1870 in introducing appliances that the soldiers had observed on their campaigns. This was the line of demarkation between the sickle and the grain cradle, the flintlock rifle and the repeating rifle, the introduction of the steam engine and the portable sawmill to take the place of the water turned mill, kerosene lamps for candle light. M. A. Friel of near Clover Lick owned the first kerosene lamp ever in the county in 1865.

But more than anything else that spurred the business men of Pocahontas County was the success of James E. A. Gibbs, of Marlinton, who after the Civil War found he was rich because of the success of a chain stitch sewing machine he had invented just before the war.

The older citizens of today have seen the adoption of such things as the steam engine, sewing machine (1872), turbine wheel, telephone (1898), printing ships (1882) bend mills, and many more. On the other hand, during this period, we lost a great many skilled workmen such as candlemakers, farriers, shoemakers, weavers, spinners, taylors, harnessmakers, saddlers, stonemasons and the like. This was especially true after the covered wagons began to make regular trips to bring in freight from Millboro, Staunton, Huttonsville, and Ronceverte and with the coming of the railroads in 1901 they became fewer and fewer.

The industrial developments were gradual. This county developed along with the internal developments of Virginia through the building of turnpikes in the 1830-50.

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At this time our natural resources were practically untouched. Agriculture and grazing of live stock were the chief industries.

*(green) Agriculture was the chief pursuit of the early settlers of Pocahontas county. Because travel was difficult and transportation facilities were meager, the settlers were compelled to be practically self sustaining. Gardening, together with the growing of small patches of buckwheat, corn, beans, and potatoes, largely constituted the early farming enterprises. Later cattle, sheep, and hogs were introduced principally for mildm wool and meat to supplement the supply of wild game and fish that was an important source of food and clothing. Trapping furnished furs and skins that could be traded for the few supplies not produced at home. The bottom lands were generally devoted to grain and hay, and the adjacent slopes were cleared and used for pasture. The land has always been farmed, for the most part, in small tracts by the owners. Few slaves were owned and the freeing of them did not affect agriculture.

Between 1880 and 1890 the production of all grains and crops increased materially. The total acreage in all grains has remained fairly constant since 1890, but acreage in certain crops have fluctuated considerably. Corn has been in the lead at all times followed by either wheat or oats. Hay increased from 10,817 acres in 1879 to 15,138 acres in 1889 and has increased very little since, but the acre yield has been more than doubled. Since 1900 the total number of hogs and cattle has dropped off slightly, but the number of sheep raised and the production of wool, dairy products, poultry and eggs have increased considerably. The acreage occupied by potatoes and garden crops most of which are grown for home use, fluctuates from year to year.

Between 1880 and 1910 the number of farms steadily increased from 682 to 1,198, the latter figure being only 3 below that given by the 1930 census report. As the size of the farms has decreased slightly in the last 50 years, the total amount of land in farms has remained fairly constant.

Poor transportation facilities, long distance from markets, and the need of cash income forced the farmers of this section in early days to turn to the production of beef. Even now with railroad shipping available, it remains the largest source of income. Formerly all cattle, when ready for market, were driven overland. To outside markets, principally pittsburg, Baltimore and Clarksburg. Many were sold as feeders

the Shenandoah and Potomac Valleys to the east and were later marketed from there.
practically all the cattle were sold Grass fattened.

Farming methods and management were governed largely by the steepness of the land and the size of the farm. Soon after transportation facilities became available the larger land owners brought in mowing machines, reapers, buggy rakes and wagons, but on the smaller patch farms and on steep or stony lands, much of the work was still done by hand, and continues so even today.

* (red) From---Pocahontas Times --- 1929
by --- Andrew Price

* (green) From---Report on Poca. County
by --- Dr. B. H. Williams of the U. S. Depart. of Agri.

April 3, 1940

Nelle Y. McLaughlin
Marlinton, W. Va.

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Chapter 4--Section 4--Part b

Reminiscences of Civil War Days.
By Evelyn Yeager Beard.

In the fall and winter of 1861-62 the Confederate soldiers camped at Camp Allegheny, my old home place, under the command of Jose (Ed) Johnson. The sugar grove belonging to my father, John Yeager, consisting of about five hundred trees was used for building the camps and cabins. This location could be used as a point of vantage, as by using field glasses they could observe the movements of the Union soldiers camped on top of Cheat Mountain, near the Clubhouse.

The year of 1861-62 was a cold and rainy year. Many of the soldiers camping there were from the South. I remember them as being not very warmly clad, and shivering with cold. Not being used to the cold, damp climate many of them sickened and died, and were buried on a little hill back of our house.

Our back porch was partitioned off to be used as a commissary by Uncle Jake Arbogast. The soldiers wanting tobacco, candy, etc., would have to wait their turn. The room being small, and at times crowded, they would ask me to make their purchases for them. Being a child and small, they would make room for me. I would make their purchases and then receive a liberal share of the candy. I was a youngster of about ten and my brother, Mack Yeager (Paul McNeel Yeager) eight. The officers and soldiers made a lot over us children. Receiving boxes from home they would invite us down to help eat them. Of course we were not particularly shy in doing so. Many of

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the cakes were decorated so fancy that as children we thought there was nothing in the world like them. Colonel McCune would often let me wear the big plume he wore in his hat, and it was a gala day for me when I would have the privilege of wearing it. When leaving Camp Allegheny, he gave me the plume, taking it from his hat, saying I could keep it for always.

One of the skirmishes of the Civil War was fought at this point, called Church Hill, ~~or~~ Camp Allegheny. While but a skirmish, it was a hard fought one and lasted from about 4 A.M. until after 2 P.M. If I remember correctly, nineteen were killed. I remember the shots falling on the roof of our house like hail. My mother and sister Fannie were ill at this time. During a lull in the battle Colonel Baldwin of the 52nd Virginia Regiment had them carried over on cots to his own cabin for safety, and they remained there during the night. My brother Mack Yeager and myself watched the remainder of the battle from a point of safety. We saw the Confederate flagman fall, and saw the flag almost instantly raised again, believe by Lieut. Rigor, but I am not positive about the name. Capt. Mollohan was killed in the battle of Church Hill, and was buried there along with many others. A spent ball passed between my brother the late Henry Yeager, and Rachel Arbogast, who was visiting us. Capt. Anderson, Confederate was killed by advanced guard of Union soldiers dressed in Confederate uniform. Capt. Anderson waved to them, thinking they were Confederate men and he was instantly killed.

After the battle was over there were several wounded men to be taken care of. The cabins were unsuitable, and my mother

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had the upstairs of our house converted into a temporary hospital. Our house was under construction when war broke out, and was not then complete. The upstairs was one large room. Several of the wounded men died, and were buried along by those killed in battle. For a brief period a downstairs room was occupied by a sick officer, with his wife and baby. Later this same room was used as a Post Office kept by Uncle Jake Arbogast. The front part of this house is still in good condition, the remainder being torn down. We had quite a collection of sabers, cannon balls, musket balls and minnie balls which we used in our play. Ed Freeman, living at the present time at the old home place at Allegheny church, finds some of the musket balls occasionally when plowing his fields. He gave some of them to us when we had a family reunion picnic there in the summer of 1924. The old batteries and trenches are still in evidence.

A Confederate soldier was sick in one of the camps of the 31st Virginia Regiment when a Union soldier crept into the cabin to steal provisions, thinking the cabin was empty. The sick soldier crawled to the door after him and shot him.

My father, John Yeager, died December 2, 1861, and was believed to have been poisoned.

In the spring of 1862 the Confederates broke camp on Top Allegheny. At two o'clock the same night of their leaving John Slaten and two or three other men set fire to the commissary cabins and camps by igniting every other cabin. My mother pleaded with them to save them so as to be used for stables and out-

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buildings, but they told her she should be thankful they were not burning the house. The 52nd and 31st Virginia Regiment camps were completely destroyed, but a few of the other cabins were saved.

When the Confederates broke camp in the spring 1862, my brothers, Will and Henry Yeager, Crawford Arbogast and others went with them, Will and Henry joining Company G. 31st Virginia Regiment, Earle's Division, Ewell's Corps. Will was killed Feb. 6, 1865 at Hatcher's Run near Petersburg, Virginia, and was buried there. Henry Yeager and W. H. Hull were captured and made prisoners at Fort Steadman near Petersburg on March 25, 1865, and taken to Point Lookout, Maryland. They were released alphabetically, W. H. Hull the early part of July, and Henry sometime later.

After so many of our own boys had joined the army, mail became an important item in the lives of those at home. All of our mail, as well as that of the neighbors, had to be gotten from Hightown, Virginia, eleven miles away, only one house being located along the way. The person making the trip would bring mail for all in the neighborhood. Practically every family had someone that belonged to them in the war. The boys, before leaving, decided that when any of them wrote a letter, they would mention the ones they knew and had seen, so each family would hear as often as possible. Mail in those days was not a daily occurrence as it is now, and receiving word, however indirectly, would be a comfort to the ones at home. When our turn came for getting the mail, I was usually the one that rode horse-

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back on the weekly trips to get it. I never was afraid, except when making the return trip. On the way home at every turn in the road, I expected to meet an army of Yankees. Eight of the eleven miles was dense timberland, and looking back on it now, I believe I was a pretty good soldier myself, for those miles seemed long ones to a child making the trip alone, even though I usually went and came in a sweeping gallop. On one of these trips my sister Fannie, about twenty years of age, later Mrs. James D. Kerr, made the trip. After leaving, several regiments of Union soldiers came by on their way to Hightown, and my mother knew that my sister would have to meet them on her way back. The hour came for her return, sundown and dark, and still she had not returned. It was a long, anxious night, and we, children that we were, at least partly realized the hours of anxious suspense that my mother was going through. At daybreak she returned. She had met the Yankee soldiers about three o'clock in the afternoon, six miles from home, at Laurel Fork. A ruffian soldier ordered her off her horse, but the officer in command (think it was Col. Geo. Washington Hull, from McDowell, Virginia) stepped forward saying, "No, Lady, stay on your horse. You shall not be harmed but we shall have to delay your return home until morning. We mean to camp near here tonight and no word must be carried back." At sundown the officer sent a guard with her to Daniel Wilfong's, three miles from home, he himself standing guard outside all night to make sure no word was sent to Confederate soldiers. At daybreak, he rejoined

his regiment, Fannie being given permission to return home.

Union soldiers sometimes made camp at Camp Bartow. After dark quite frequently mother would take one of us out where we could see down to Camp Bartow to see if any camp fires were lighted. If so, we knew they would pass our house about eight o'clock the next morning. We would then drive the stock over to Sugar Camp Ridge, so the Yankees would not take them as they went by, brother Brown Yeager and Henry Wilfong guarding them in the mountains. Sugar cakes, syrup, meats and other provisions would be buried also. Years later jugs of syrup were found and dug up.

Mother and Fannie knitted socks for Will and Henry while in the army. Yankees were often passing through, and at one of these times we had quite a scramble in the pantry. Mother and I entered in time to see a Yankee trying to make his escape through the window with his arms full of provisions and the prized knitted socks, with Fannie clinging frantically to the socks, determined he should not have them. Those watching from outside laughed at their comrade's predicament, trying to retain the socks as well as the provisions, and yet not lose his balance on the high narrow window. Fannie was victorious in the struggle for possession of the socks.

Cousin Mag Arbogast, later Campbell, and I were visiting Aunt Matilda Nottingham who lived near Boyer. As in every war comedy and tragedy go side by side, and pranks played could easily have been turned into tragedy. We were about thirteen years old at this time. We dressed in uniform, put

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a gun over our shoulder, and went out on the hill where we knew Dave and Jim Kerr, who were not old enough to go to the army, could see us. They spied us and, thinking we were suspicious characters, possibly Yankee spies, shouldered their guns also and started our way. We began to saunter in the direction of the house, but it was not long before we heard them cry, "Halt," which we knew to do immediately. Only a short time before one of the pickets had cried, "Halt" to Jack Slayton. Not being quite normal mentally, he became frightened and did not obey the command. I can imagine I see them carrying him by our house now.

When the heavy fighting and cannonading was being done in Richmond and other points in Virginia, we would lie flat on the ground and listen to the rumble of the cannon. Anxiously we would wait for mail to hear if our boys were in those battles and were safe.

At the close of the Civil War, Henry Arbogast Yeager was held as a prisoner-of-war at Point Lookout, Maryland, and was released, after taking the oath of allegiance to the United States, on June 17, 1865. The prisoners were released alphabetically, and Henry Yeager realized too late to be released under "J", as the original spelling of Yeager was with a "J", and he began calling himself "Reager" instead of Yeager. When he was finally released it was under "R" as Henry A. Reager but he took good care to sign it "Henty A. Yeager". This is true, as the photostat copy on file in Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va., original on file in War Dept., Washington, D. C., plainly shows. Their system was not as ironclad then as now.



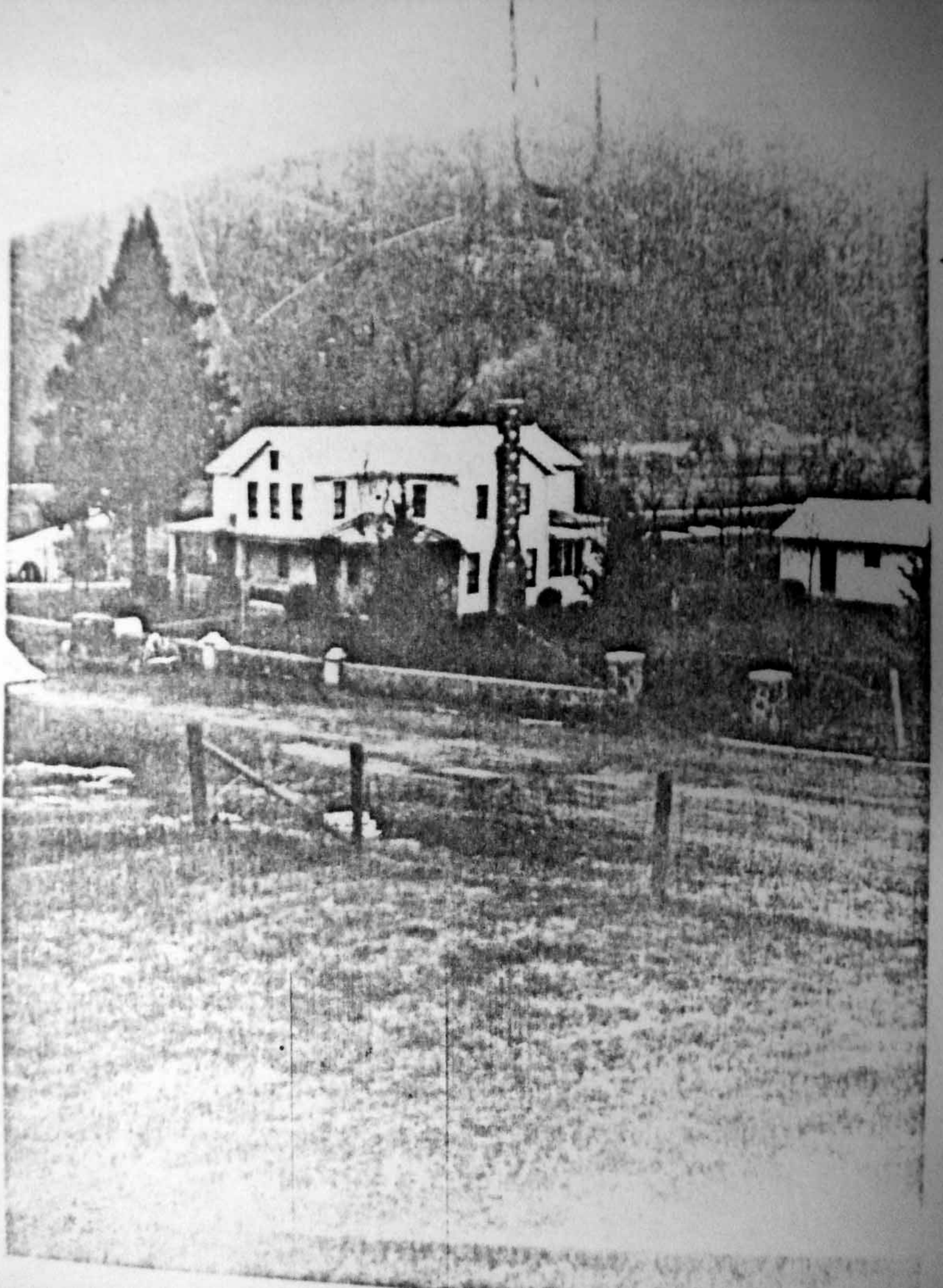
Juanita S. Dilley
Pocahontas County

A part of the Confederate fortifications at Camp Bartow at Travelers Repose. Two cannons were stationed here. This and several others are still to be found on this battle field.



Historic Travelers Repose as it is today. The only regular stage coach stop in the county. The original building was practically destroyed during the Civil War. Mr. B. B. Beard who now owns it tells me that the front part of the house is pretty much as it was rebuilt by Peter Yeager after the war.





March 23, 1940

CHAPTER 4 - SECTION 4b - 3

Many of our citizens were arrested during the war for being sympathizers on one side or the other. The following are a few of the names I have been able to find. Also some were killed for their beliefs.

Thomas Galford was a pronounced Confederate sympathizer and was regarded as a dangerous citizen to be at large in war times. He was arrested by a detachment of Union soldiers under Captain Nelson Tray, sent to Camp Chase where he died during the war.

John Smith of Stony Creek was a Union sympathizer. He was arrested by the Confederate militia, but was proven not dangerous and was released on parole. He died before he got back home.

Richard Auldridge was a Confederate sympathizer and was killed. His two sons were in the southern army. The one son, John Auldridge was killed at Gettysburg. The other son, Allen Auldridge, was discharged as a brave and faithful soldier.

Josiah Beard was taken prisoner by Federal troops near the end of the war, though he was past 70 years of age. Something was said to rouse his ire, and he challenged the whole squad to single combat.

Henry Arbogast was a sincere, decided but harmless sympathizer with the Union cause. When last seen alive he and his neighbor Eli Buzzard were in charge of a squad of persons claiming to be confederate scouts. A few days afterwards these two civilians were found dead near the roadside, about half way between their homes at Glade Hill and Frost. From the attitude in which Arbogast's body was found it is inferred that he died in the act of prayer.

William R. Moore lived near Edray. He was greatly respected. His sympathies were with the Union adherents, and he died at Wheeling during the war.
(From) (Prices History of Focahontas)

Juanita S. Dilley

George Burner was a Jacksonian democrat, and strange to say one of the original Pocahontas secessionists, so intense his devotions to state rights had become.

(The question of secession was the main issue in Pocahontas. Many had already freed their slaves because they did not believe in slavery, yet they did not believe in setting them all free at once.)

Jacob Slaven lived on the Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike. Many people traveled this route, and the home of Jacob Slaven was well known as a place of hospitality. Governor Joe Johnson and Stonewall Jackson have stopped here to enjoy trout and venison. Everything seemed prosperous and pleasant with Jacob Slaven until the terrible ravages of war laid his home in ashes, and exiled the happy inmates.

few places in the county were so ravaged by war as was upper Pocahontas. From - Prices' history.

Irregular Warfare - Bushwhacking. In the spring of 1862 with the regular troops swept out of the county, the irregular fighters began to cause trouble. They called them gorillas at first, but later coined the word bushwhackers. It was the curse of a brave and impetuous people, such as are to be found in the mountains that they could not help taking part in the fighting whether they had been sworn in or not. They carried guns like city men carry canes, and they shot on one side or the other according to their convictions.

Milroy in a letter to Gen. W. S. Rosecrans wrote on March 18, 1862. This day was set as the day for drafting of the militia of Pocahontas and Highland counties. Many citizens to escape draft were hiding in the mountains and trying to escape. Seven have arrived here yesterday.

March 18th Milroy wrote that 54 refugees from Pocahontas and Highland had come to him to escape being drafted into the rebel army; that the penalty to refuse to be drafted was death. March 31st Milroy reported refugees

continue to come. This day 12 arrived from Pocahontas and reported that the impressment still continued.

April 4, 1862 General William Skeen wrote to Confederate headquarters that these men that Virginia had authorized to organize as regulars for the home defense were devastating the country and had killed three citizens of Pocahontas and stolen 15 horses. He complained of them as bitterly as did the Federal generals.

Regular troops were withdrawn after the Battle of Top Allegheny. Then it was hundreds of able-bodied men took up arms to defend themselves, and there were uneasy times.

Soldiers at home on furlough responded to appeal for assistance and little armies would spring up in a day, have a skirmish, and disband as quickly as they had come together. It was but an echo of the minute men of the Revolution. The battle of Duncan's Lane was the largest battle fought in Pocahontas by these troops and furlough soldiers, though there was continual smaller skirmishes.

The courts did not meet and the citizens suffered from the needs of soldiers of both armies and from the irregular troops. It is certain that nowhere in the country was there more peril to inhabitants than in the county of Pocahontas. This danger was so great because of the division of sentiment.

From - West Virginia Blue Book 1928

There was a skirmish at Marlins Bottom April 19, 1864, Captain J. W. Marshall's Co. of the 19th Virginia Cavalry came upon a company of Federal soldiers identity unknown, and chased them north toward Edray.

LAST BATTLE

The last battle of the Civil war was fought at Brandy Hallow near Huntersville, on the site of Camp Northwest on the 18th day of May 1865.

This engagement was fought between the 8th Ohio Cavalry and a portion of Gen. W. L. Jackson's army returning to their homes after the surrender.

s From - 1928 W. Va. Blue Book - By Andrew Price

CIVIL WAR ACTIVITIES IN POCAHONTAS

Terminating in Battle at White Sulphur

On August 21, 1863 Averill started to Huntersville and halted his main command at Frost, while some of his command drove the Confederates down Knapps Creek until they reached the Northwest passage between Huntersville and Minnehaha Springs. Here the Confederates took a stand in the canyon. Averill hearing about it at Frost, on the 22nd sent Gibson's Battalion down Knapps Creek to make it appear that it led the army. Then Averill with his main army crossed over into the Hills through the Shrader settlement. By this road Averill rode into the deserted village of Huntersville in the rear of the Confederates. A squadron of cavalry under Col. Ohley was sent to learn the whereabouts of the Confederates and found them retreating towards Warm Springs. They were overtaken and there was continual skirmishing until the Confederates were driven through the Ryder Gap into Virginia.

Camp Northwest near Huntersville was the first elaborate camp to be built in the Civil War. It was located on the White farm, and there were substantial log building, much equipment, and a lot of supplies there. The camp was burned on August 22, 1863. The commissary buildings, stores, cabins, blacksmith shop, wagons, rifles, and so forth were destroyed and a lot of plunder carried away. All the wheat and flour in the mill opposite J. A. Reed's house was also destroyed. That night the Federals camped at Huntersville and waited for two regiments that were marching to join them by way of Beverly and Marlinton. On the 25th Averill marched to Warm Springs and Col. Jackson and Gen. Jones retreated before him to Millboro. Averill rested that night and having cleared Pocahontas of the Confederate army, decided to do the same for Greenbrier County. He therefore turned south and marched into Greenbrier.

To keep Pocahontas County clear of Confederates he sent back the 10th W. Va. to Camp at Marlins Bottom. It was the regiment of General Thomas M. Harris. It was his command that fired the last shot at Appomattox. After the war he served on the commission that tried the assassins of President Lincoln.

At the time he was in camp at Marlins Bottom, he has with him his twelve year old son, who has a horse of his own and who rode as the mascot of the "Tenth Legion". This twelve year old boy is none other than Hon. John T. Harris, the state clerk of the West Virginia senate and the most popular man in West Virginia.

From, West Virginia
Legislative Hand Book-1928